

Prevention of Tooth Decay: Health Promotion Strategies

Enclosed is a list of activities to assist in the prevention of tooth decay among mothers and children and to treat existing oral health conditions:

1. Promote appropriate forms of fluoride intake (water, toothpaste, rinse, supplements, professional application in the dental office, fluoride varnish) for mothers and children.
2. Promote application of dental sealants on the top of 1st and 2nd permanent molar (back) teeth of children.
3. Promote the use of xylitol chewing gum by mothers and children (over four years of age).
4. Increase access to preventive and treatment dental health services in your community.
5. Implement successful social marketing strategies to address oral health.
6. Utilize educational materials to inform your community on the importance of good oral health.
7. Continue to monitor disease trends in your community by collecting data on oral health needs, conducting focus groups, surveying dental health professionals and others involved in program development and implementation.
8. Support policies to address oral health services in your community.
9. Leverage funds to support oral health programs such as funds from the California Nutrition Network for Healthy, Active Families and Federally Financial Participation.
10. Collaborate with existing California oral health programs such as 1) the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program, otherwise known as the Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) Program, 2) Healthy Families, and 3) the Children's Dental Disease Prevention Program.
11. Train and educate non-dental professionals on the importance of oral health and the connection between oral diseases and systemic conditions such as preterm and/or low birth weight baby, diabetes, and others.